AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1 and 21 as follows:

1.(amended) A method of encapsulating a sensitive material comprising:

(a) plating the sensitive material onto a solid carrier, in an atmosphere inert to the sensitive material, to form a plated material; and

(b) encapsulating the plated material, wherein encapsulating comprises spraying a melted encapsulant onto the plated material.

21. (amended) A method of encapsulating a sensitive material comprising:

(a) introducing the sensitive material into an encapsulation vessel, wherein the atmosphere in the encapsulation vessel is inert to the sensitive material; and

(b) encapsulating the sensitive material, wherein encapsulating comprises spraying a melted encapsulant onto the sensitive material.

Please cancel Claims 12, 13 and 22.

STATUS OF CLAIMS:

Claims are listed with markings to show changes made vis-à-vis previous amendment.

1. (currently amended) A method of encapsulating a sensitive material comprising:

(a) plating the sensitive material onto a solid carrier, in an atmosphere inert to the sensitive material, to form a plated material; and

(b) encapsulating the plated material, wherein encapsulating comprises spraying a melted encapsulant onto the plated material.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or helium.

3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the solid carrier is chilled prior to plating with the sensitive material.

4. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein the solid carrier is chilled by liquid nitrogen.

5. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the solid carrier is porous or semi porous.

6. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein the solid carrier is maltodextrin, silicon dioxide, starches and starch derivatives, gums, or hydrocolloids.

7. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the encapsulation occurs in an atmosphere inert to the sensitive material.

8. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is oxygen-free.

9. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or helium.

10. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material has a boiling point of between about 40°F and 250°F.

11. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is oxygen-free.

12. (cancelled).

13. (cancelled).

14. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the percentage of encapsulant in the resulting encapsulated particles is between about 10 to about 90%.

15. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein the percentage of encapsulant in the resulting encapsulated particles is between about 20 to about 80%.

16. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is a volatile material.

17. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is an oxygen sensitive material.

18. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is a biologically active substance.

19. (previously amended) The method of claim 18 wherein the biologically active substance is selected from the group consisting of *Lactobacilli*, *Bifidobacterium*, *Enterococci*, phytase, amylases, lipases, invertases, transglutaminases, proteases, lipoxygenases and

pentosanases.

20. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is at least one selected from the group consisting of alcohols, acetones, ketones, aldehydes, organic acids, and antioxidants.

21. (currently amended) A method of encapsulating a sensitive material comprising:

(a) introducing the sensitive material into an encapsulation vessel, wherein the atmosphere in the encapsulation vessel is inert to the sensitive material; and

(b) encapsulating the sensitive material, wherein encapsulating comprises spraying a melted encapsulant onto the sensitive material.

22. (cancelled).

23. (previously amended) A method according to Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is lyophilized before being introduced into the encapsulation vessel.

24. (previously presented) The method of Claim 21 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or helium.

25. (previously presented) The method of Claim 21 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is oxygen-free.

26. (previously presented) The method of Claim 21 wherein the percentage of encapsulant in the resulting encapsulated sensitive material is between about 10 to about 90%.

27. (previously presented) The method of Claim 26 wherein the percentage of encapsulant in the resulting encapsulated sensitive material is between about 20 to about 80%.

28. (previously presented) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is a volatile material.

29. (previously presented) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material has a boiling point of between about 40° F and 250° F.

30. (previously presented) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is an oxygen sensitive material.

31. (previously presented) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is a biologically active substance.

32. (previously amended) The method of Claim 31 wherein the biologically active substance is selected from the group consisting of *Lactobacilli*, *Bifidobacterium*, *Enterococci*, phytase, amylases, lipases, invertases, transglutaminases, proteases, lipoxygenases and pentosanases.

33. (previously amended) The method of Claim 32 wherein the biologically active substance is *Lactobacillus* acidophilus.

34. (previously presented) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is at least one selected from the group consisting of alcohols, acetones, ketones, aldehydes, organic acids, and antioxidants.

Claims 35-62 (previously cancelled)